

# Internet saves Stewart paper, time, money

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Normally, contractors bidding for one of the multiple construction projects on Fort Stewart would have an encyclopedia-sized stack of papers to read, fill out and turn in.

All that has changed. Now, thanks to the technology of the Internet, the Fort Stewart Directorate of Contracting helps save paper and time by putting its projects up for bid on the world wide web.

"We have over \$75 million in contracts every year," said Gwen Strickland, DOC contracting chief. "We're doing our best to attract more contractors. With this new method, we hope to increase competition and lower the prices."

The contracting office will move to a completely paperless mode by Jan. 1, 2000. The office is already putting its projects on the Internet for bid, however.

When potential contractors visit the DOC website, they can view all of the schematics of the various projects, including construction drawings.

Right now, bidders must still submit their application by mail. Eventually, the entire process will be performed in cyberspace.

"We've already seen how the entire process saves time," said Strickland. "From the time we get a new project, we can have it on the site for bidding in five minutes."

A majority of the construction projects are for maintenance and upkeep of existing buildings, Strickland said. The Army Corps of Engineers handles the construction of the new buildings.

"Right now, we're just putting construction bids on the Internet, but eventually, we'll include goods and services," Strickland added.

What does this mean for soldiers? Ultimately, new facilities will be built and maintained faster, with a higher level of quality. "By increasing competition, we can save money and time and ensure a higher quality for the work that is done," said Strickland.

The Directorate of Contracting website can be found at [www.stewart.army.mil/doc/intro.htm](http://www.stewart.army.mil/doc/intro.htm).